



JENNIFER M. GRANHOLM
GOVERNOR

STATE OF MICHIGAN
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
LANSING



THOMAS D. WATKINS, JR.
SUPERINTENDENT OF
PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

M E M O R A N D U M

To: State Board of Education

Tom Watkins

February 23, 2004

Subject: Update on MEAP Timeline

In December, 2003, a schedule for the Michigan Educational Assessment Program (MEAP) testing and reporting activities was prepared for dissemination to the State Board of Education, the Governor, the Michigan Legislature, as well as to news media and others with an interest in the MEAP activities. The schedule consisted of a one-page summary, showing the major activities and when they would take place (see Attachment A), as well as a more detailed schedule for use by MEAP staff, others helping the state accomplish the work (e.g., Department of Information Technology staff and contractors), and MEAP contractors. The purpose of this memorandum is to provide a mid-year update on the progress in sticking to this schedule and issuing MEAP reports on a timely basis.

School Report Cards The report cards were issued on January 30, as shown on the attached schedule. Almost all schools' report cards were completed by this date. However, there were schools that failed to provide sufficient information in their appeal for staff to process their requests by report time, so these schools were issued "incompletes." These schools have now received report cards and staff are busy examining the ways, with the active input from stakeholders, in which the system can be improved for this year, when report cards are due prior to the start of school.

Fall, 2003 High School Testing About 42,000 high school students participated in this program. It is for some high school students an opportunity to re-take MEAP tests not previously passed, and for others, a chance to take the tests to try to qualify for dual enrollment in a higher education institution. As the attached schedule shows, the scores were to be reported by February 10, 2004. In fact, the scores were released electronically to schools to provide results to students, teachers and parents a day early. The schools had a chance to view the demographic coding for students who participated prior to the release of the results, and about 40% of the schools took the opportunity of doing so.

Winter, 2004 Elementary and Middle School Testing This is the program in which students in grades 4, 5, 7, and 8 participate in MEAP. The testing period ended in mid-February, and answer documents are being returned. While it is too early to say for certain, the program remains on track for the results to be produced by May 7. Like the high school Fall-03 testing, we will provide schools the opportunity of looking at how students' demographics are coded prior to the release of the results.

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608 WEST ALLEGAN STREET • P.O. BOX 30008 • LANSING, MICHIGAN 48909
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MEAP staff took several steps to try to prevent the problems that occurred last year from reoccurring. These included the use of school identification sheets on top of each school's sets of answer sheets, the indication on these school ID sheets which answer documents and/or the number of answer documents being returned (so that "missing" answer documents can be immediately noted), and the log-in of answer documents by school so that discrepant shipments can be immediately traced.

Spring, 2004 High School Testing All high school juniors who have not previously taken the MEAP at least once are to participate in the program; in addition, there are some sophomores and seniors participating as well (for the reasons cited above for the Fall, 2003 program).

The tests for this assessment are now being finalized, proofed, and sent to the printing contractor for printing, packaging and shipment to school districts. A teleconference to review the assessment administration directions and procedures will be held this spring prior to the April 26-May 7 or May 3-14 testing periods. By state law, the assessment must be given within the last 30 days of school.

While the MEAP contractor was late in delivering the draft tests and administration manuals, staff are working to provide the tests to the printing contractor within a few days of the original schedule; we don't anticipate that the delays will cause any problems in getting testing materials to schools in time for testing to occur on schedule. Longer term, we are working to define our schedules in greater detail so these delays are caught sooner, before they become a problem.

Other Test Results Due to past problems with last year's assessment program, results from the Spring, 2003 high school testing were available only electronically. Several local educators and other citizens have requested printed copies of the results for their records. Staff has recently completed the arrangements to have these reports printed and sent to local school districts. This will complete the "clean-up" efforts for last year's MEAP assessment programs.

Summary At the current time, schedules are being adhered to almost all of the time, work on correcting demographics is beginning to transition to times before the results are produced in final form, and planning is under way for short- and longer-term fixes to MEAP. MEAP staff has been working with DIT and its contractors to devise a long-term plan of support for MEAP directly and for those who use MEAP results (e.g., the Merit Board that uses high school results for Merit Awards to students; the Department that uses MEAP results for school accountability and accreditation efforts such as NCLB AYP and EducationYES!). The goal is to keep the current program afloat, devise improvements to the program and thoroughly test these before implementation, and implement these when they are proven to work. Staff plan to work with the Department of Management and Budget/Purchasing to insert penalty clauses in current MEAP contracts both external (i.e., Measurement Inc.) and internal (i.e., CEPI and DIT), and longer-term, to re-bid the program starting this next fall.

It is the belief of the MEAP staff that at the current time, MEAP is on track to report results this spring and summer as scheduled. I will, of course, keep you informed about how the implementation process is proceeding, especially if there appears to be deviations from the attached schedule.

I want to commend Dr. Jeremy Hughes, Dr. Ed Roeber and their team for their commitment, energy and hard work to make significant strides to enhance and improve the MEAP for our schools, teachers, and most importantly for our children.

FY 2003 - 2004 MEAP Summary Schedule

Start Dates	Schedule Reference	11/17/03	12/01/03	12/15/03	12/29/03	01/12/04	01/26/04	02/09/04	02/23/04	03/07/04	03/21/04	03/29/04	04/07/04	04/12/04	04/19/04	05/03/04	05/20/04	06/03/04	06/17/04	06/27/04	07/11/04	07/27/04
End Dates		11/30/03	12/14/03	12/28/03	01/11/04	01/25/04	02/08/04	02/22/04	03/06/04	03/20/04	04/03/04	04/17/04	04/24/04	05/08/04	05/15/04	05/29/04	06/12/04	06/26/04	07/10/04	07/24/04	08/07/04	08/21/04
Progress Meetings			*	*	*	*					*		*		*			*	*		*	*
Elem./Middle School Report Cards	74-77																					
Resolve APP Delay Schools (192)	75		12/5	12/15		1/23																
Appeals Resolved	76																					
Report Results	77																					
High School Report Cards	78-84																					
Data Cleanup	79																					
Modify Web Site	80	11/25	12/5																			
Appeals Window	81			12/15-12/19																		
Appeals Resolution	82			12/22		1/23																
Internal Validation	83					1/21																
Report Results	84																					
Fall MEAP 03	85-169																					
Scan and Score (M1)	132-162			12/17																		
Printing	163-168					1/19																
Modify Web Site	169-180		12/13			1/20	2/6															
Report Results	174-179						2/10															
Winter MEAP 04	190-349																					
Pre-ID Students (Schools)	204-208		12/4																			
Print andShip Test Booklets (Quarter)	209-251		12/4		1/9																	
Schools Receive Test Packages	251-263					1/12-1/23																
Schools Administer Tests	265-260						1/26-2/13															
Scan and Score (M1)	261-302						2/16						4/9									
Report Results	303-332											3/20										
Spring MEAP 04	350-441																					
Pre-ID Students (Schools)	374-377																					
Print andShip Test Booklets (Quarter)	378-396																					
Schools Receive Test Packages	394-395																					
Schools Administer Tests	397-399													4/12-4/19								
Scan and Score (M1)	400-440														4/26	5/14					6/21	7/15
Report Results	441															5/11				6/22		

* Once every month, a high level meeting will be held to assess overall progress on this timeline. This meeting will involve the Superintendent's Office, the Office of Educational Assessment, CEPI, and DET. In the periods between these meetings, the Director of the Office of Educational Assessment will be monitoring weekly progress.